

COMMISSION NEWS

WELCOMING OUR NEW DIRECTOR

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) is proud to announce Governor Jim Justice's appointment of Tia Welch as Executive Director of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission (HRC). Director Welch joined us July 6, 2021, and has already shown her dedication to furthering the Commission's purpose of combatting discrimination in West Virginia. From the moment she arrived, she has fostered an atmosphere of inclusion, kindness to her staff, education, and hands-on engagement.

DHHR Cabinet Secretary Bill Crouch noted, "Tia's knowledge and experience make her a perfect choice for this important role. With her history in promoting human rights for West Virginians, I am confident she will advance the commission's goal to prevent discrimination and encourage respect and tolerance among all residents."

Leadership is hardly a new experience for Dir. Welch, having been appointed as the Director of the West Virginia Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO) in March 2019. There, she began a campaign to increase state agencies' understanding and compliance with equal employment laws, and collaborated with other agencies to promote diversity and inclusion, and to eliminate barriers to employment.

Prior to the EEO, she worked with Goodwill Industries of the Kanawha Valley, and nearly 20 years with the Charleston Job Corps Center. She has a master's degree in theology from Freedom Bible College, a Bachelor of Science from West Virginia State University, and a ministerial ordination from the Heart of God Ministries International Fellowship of Churches. Since June 2016, she has served as Senior Pastor of Heart of God Charleston with the support of her husband, R. Antron Welch, Minister of Music.

Please join us in welcoming Executive Director Tia Welch, and sharing our thanks for the continued work to further equality, inclusion, and diversity in West Virginia!



Executive Director Tia Welch

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COMMISSIONERS RE-ELECT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The West Virginia Human Rights Act of 1961 created the Human Rights Commission and called for the appointment of 9 Commissioners who broadly represent racial, religious, and ethnic groups within the state. Each July, the Commissioners are required to meet in Charleston and elect a chairperson and vice chairperson. On July 29, 2021, the eight current Commissioners attended a meeting where they were introduced to the new Executive Director and formally reelected their chairperson and vice chairperson.

Rev. Dr. Darrell Cummings of Wheeling was again elected Chairperson. He is currently the Pastor of Bethlehem Apostolic Temple Church in Wheeling and Shiloh Apostolic Faith Assembly in Weirton. Chair Cummings earned his Doctorate of Theology from Ashtabula Bible School and has a long career of community service dating back to when he became a minister at age 16. Always eager to participate in the Commission's activities, Chair Cummings recently served as one of the featured speakers for the West Virginia Civil Rights Day virtual celebration on August 26. A summary of Chair Cummings' career of service is featured on the HRC's website under the "About Us" tab.

Timothy Hairston of Morgantown was also unanimously reelected as the Commission's Vice Chairperson. As a retired lineman and active member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Tim often refers to himself as "the labor representative" on the Commission. Mr. Hairston has also served as a member of the City of Morgantown Human Rights Commission for several years, and he has more than 40 years of experience in martial arts.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT!

Thank you, Yodora Booth, for 33 years with the HRC, and best wishes for a long and happy retirement! You will be missed.



HRC Staff at Multifest

MULTIFEST 2021

The first weekend of August, the West Virginia Human Rights Commission celebrated Multifest 31 in Charleston, WV at Haddad River Front Park. Several staff members shared information about discrimination, rights, and what the Commission does to protect those rights every day. Throughout the weekend, HRC staff spoke to individuals on every side of the issue of discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodation, heard their stories, provided informational hand-outs, and gave guidance on submitting a complaint when necessary. HRC is proud to serve the State of West Virginia, and happy to get out into our communities and share collective knowledge. Thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate Multifest, HRC looks forward to many more events and chances to work face-to-face with West Virginians.

CIVIL RIGHTS DAY

Every year, the Human Rights Commission, with the support of the Office of the Governor, recognizes the importance of civil rights in the State of West Virginia. On August 26, HRC broadcast its Civil Rights Day virtual ceremony on Facebook Live, and on West Virginia Public Broadcasting's West Virginia Channel. This year, Dr. R. Charles Byers, Provost Emeritus, Vice President Emeritus for Academic Affairs, and historian of WV State University was keynote speaker.

"Learn to start observing people and interacting with people in a positive manner. Start looking at people for who they are, not their religion, the color of their skin, where they are from, or socioeconomic status," Dr. Byers said. "I always heard that you reap what you sow, what goes around comes around. Those are very key tenants you take into consideration as you communicate with people... Too many of us are not standing up for what is right. We are allowing too many who are thinking wrong, perpetuating wrong, to take the lead."

Also speaking during the ceremony was HRC Director Tia Welch who said, "Recognizing the journey toward civil rights includes honoring the successes and highlighting work yet to be done, the Human Rights Commission applauds all West Virginians who work toward the continued assurance of civil rights both within and beyond our state's borders."

HRC thanks everyone who participated in this celebration, and looks forward to future celebrations and successes. Special thanks to the speakers who took part in the ceremony — Governor Jim Justice, United States Senators Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito, DHHR Cabinet Secretary Bill Crouch, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission Reverend Doctor Darrell Cummings, pledge of allegiance by Bream Center for Childhood Development, America the Beautiful sung by Vanessa White, and Director Tia Welch and keynote speaker Dr. R. Charles Byers.

To view the ceremony, visit the West Virginia Human Rights Commission on Facebook, or go to <https://bit.ly/38dAIYR>



Dr. R. Charles Byers

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

October 2, 1967—Thurgood Marshall was sworn in as the first African American Supreme Court Justice of the United States, nominated by President Lyndon B. Johnson who said that this was “the right thing to do, the right time to do it, the right man and the right place.” Marshall, born in 1908, spent his life dedicated to fighting for civil rights. He graduated Howard University’s School of Law top of his class in 1933, joining the NAACP in 1934. He would go on to be affiliated with the NAACP for 25 years, founding and heading their Legal Defense and Educational Fund from 1940-61. He established himself as the nation’s leading legal civil rights advocate

when he successfully argued the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* in front of the US Supreme Court, whose ruling in 1954 paved the way for desegregation in schools. He went on to be appointed by President John F. Kennedy to the Court of Appeals in 1961, and was named the Solicitor General of the US by Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, before his appointment to the Supreme Court, where he served for 24 years.

During the bicentennial celebration of the Constitution 20 years after his appointment to the Supreme Court, he gave a controversial speech, saying “...the government they devised was defective from the start, requiring several amendments, a civil war, and major social transformation to attain the system of constitutional government, and its respect for the individual freedoms and human rights, we hold as fundamental today.” He finished by saying, “Some may more quietly commemorate the suffering, struggle, and sacrifice that has triumphed over much of what was wrong with the original document, and observe the anniversary with hopes not realized and promises not fulfilled. I plan to celebrate the bicentennial of the Constitution as a living document, including the Bill of Rights and other amendments protecting individual freedoms and human rights.”

Upon his death in 1993, he left all his personal notes and papers to the Library of Congress, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. He has been honored with many memorials over the years, including a statue in the Lawyers Mall across from the Maryland State House, has had numerous buildings named in his honor—the primary building for the federal court system on Capitol Hill (which has a statue of him in the atrium), Texas Southern University’s law school, the University of Maryland School of Law’s library, the historic Twelfth Street YMCA in Shaw, DC (home of the first African American chapter of the YMCA), the airport in Baltimore, UC San Diego’s former Third College, a school in Olympia, WA and a charter school in DC. This charter school was the first law-themed school in DC, founded based on the principles of Justice Marshall, that every child should have a world-class education and the opportunity to reach their full potential. He was also named in the General Convention of the Episcopal Church’s liturgical calendar, “Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints,” with May 17 designated as his feast day; and the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico instituted the annual Thurgood Marshall Award, given to the top student in civil rights at each of Puerto Rico’s four law schools. Marshall’s Bible was used by the first female, first African American, and first Asian American Vice President at her inauguration in Washington—Kamala Harris. ¹

October—ADHD Awareness Month

Let’s talk about some of the symptoms people don’t talk about with ADHD. Below, you’ll find descriptions of some of the major umbrella terms for symptoms that individuals with ADHD struggle with the most. Some other symptoms may or may not fit under those umbrellas—like fidgeting and getting up when not appropriate; interrupting, butting in, and answering before a question is finished; money management and relationship issues; poor working memory, things like anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder. ^{2,3}

Time blindness—Adults typically develop an innate awareness of time and an ability to track its passing, but people with ADHD are much more time-blind than others. ⁴

Executive dysfunction—a term used to describe a range of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional difficulties which often occur as a result of traumatic brain injuries or certain disorders. They may struggle to organize, plan, regulate emotions, set schedules, stick with tasks, initiating inappropriate behavior, keep track of personal items, keep their living spaces organized, self-awareness, self-restraint, motivation, problem solving, and more. ⁵

Deficient Emotional Self-Regulation—refers to deficiencies in 4 components of emotional self-regulation. 1. Ability to self-soothe and down-regulate a strong emotion to reduce its severity. 2. Ability to refocus attention from emotionally provocative events. 3. Ability to organize or substitute more moderate, healthier emotional responses in the service of goals and long-term welfare. 4. Ability to inhibit inappropriate behavior triggered by strong emotions—illustrated by low frustration tolerance, impatience, quickness to anger, aggression, greater emotional excitability, and other negative reactions. ⁶

Rejection sensitive dysphoria—most people with ADHD are very sensitive to what others think or say about them, up to 99% are more rejection sensitive than non-ADHDers. Nearly 1/3 say it’s the hardest part of ADHD. RSD may cause them to work too hard to be liked, or it may make them stop trying and stay out of any situation where they might get hurt (social withdrawal). It causes low self-esteem, emotional outbursts, anxiety, relationship problems, feelings of failure, setting unattainable standards for themselves, withdrawal from others, even family, friends, loved ones, thoughts of self harm, and suicidal ideation. ⁷

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The WV Human Rights Commission has accomplished fulfilling its vacancy of an Executive Director.
- Several committees have been established for operations and morale such as the Safety Committee, Newsletter, and Fun & Celebration.
- In addition, contact has been reactivated with city human rights/relations councils.
- The HRC has received two grants from 1) HUD for outreach and education on fair housing and 2) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).
- As a Federal Employment Partner Agency (FEPA) the WV HRC submitted and received approval for the Same Work, Equal Pay Initiative.

How does it work? The WVHRC will accept applications from staff and students 14-21 years old residing in the counties of Cabell, Fayette, Logan, Kanawha, Raleigh, Mercer, and McDowell to provide workshops, seminars, and outreach around pay equity. This program is an initiative of IIRC Director Tia L. Welch.

WHAT WE DO

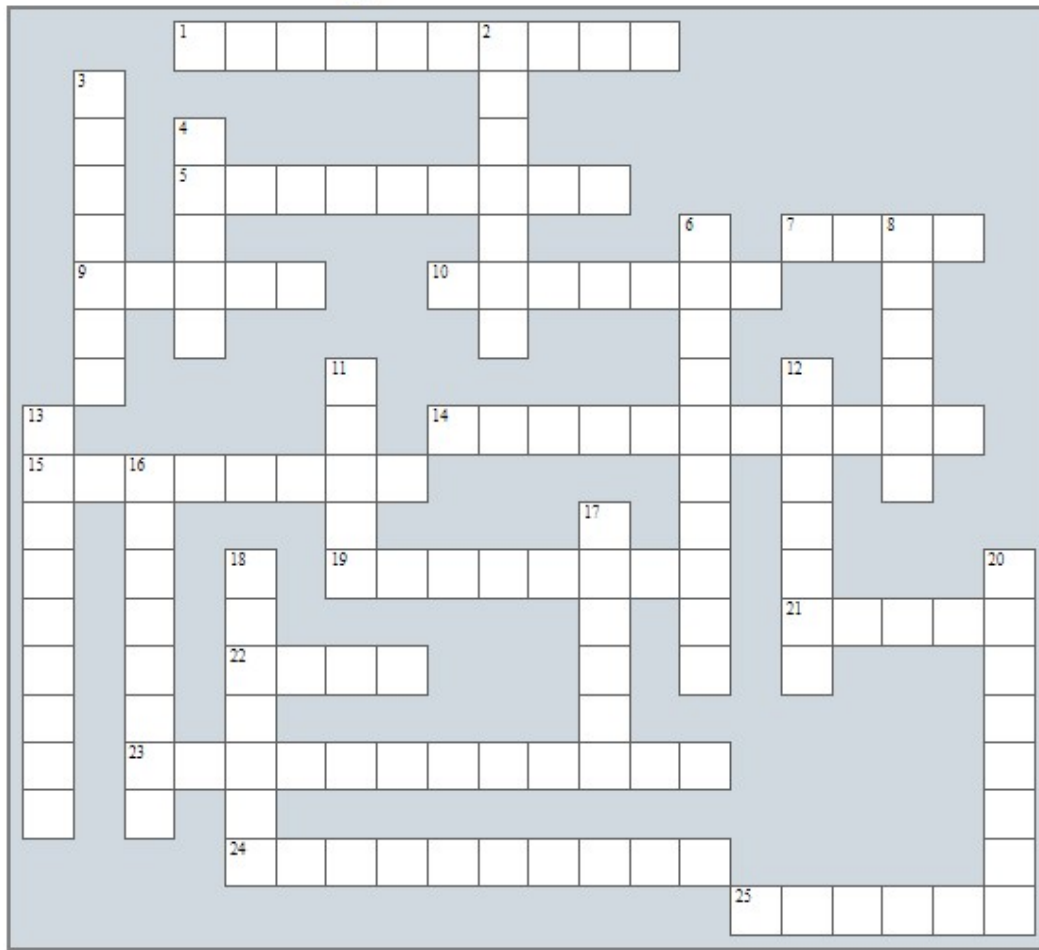
The WV Human Rights Commission provides outreach and education to citizens across the state of WV on Fair Housing, Equal Employment and Public Accommodations through annual training conferences and seminars. The commission is available to provide training in-person and virtually by request.

The commission can assist citizens by providing documents to file a complaint of discrimination with the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. Once a citizen files a complaint, the HRC will investigate claims for cause findings. If a complainant has a probable cause finding, the commission will provide an attorney through the Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Division free of charge.

CITATIONS

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Civil Rights Crossword Puzzle



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Across

1. Booker, who started the Tuskegee Institute
5. She sat on the bus and didn't move (1st & last)
7. Martin Luther _____, Jr.
9. A person who is the property of another
10. Laws that enforced racial reparation and inequality
14. Word used to describe the separation of people by race
15. First African American Supreme Court Justice
19. Women's _____; the right of women to vote
21. First African American President of the United States
22. Little Rock _____; a group of black students who enrolled in a formerly all-white school, as a test of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling
23. A person who is against slavery
24. Constitutional amendment that gave women the right to vote
25. Colin _____; first African American US Secretary of State

Down

2. State where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born
3. President Lydon B. _____ signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964
4. "I have a _____"
6. Alabama city where bus boycott was held
8. _____ Mandela, who fought for civil rights in South Africa
11. Ida B. _____ led a campaign against lynching
12. Elizabeth Cady _____, a leader in the women's rights movement
13. The 13th _____ made slavery illegal in the US
16. Underground _____, a safe passage network in the US
17. Civil rights leader in India who believed in non-violent protest
18. President who signed the Emancipation Proclamation
20. Jackie Robinson, first African American to play pro in this sport

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